

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 and 9-16 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-4 and 6 are amended and claims 7 and 8 are cancelled. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the indication set forth in the Office Action that claim 8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The Office Action indicates that claim 8 is allowable because it recites that the electrostatic holding device further comprises a distance detecting device configured to detect the distance between the electrode and the holding object, wherein the control device controls the holding object based on distance information detected by the distance detecting device to be floated and held to the electrode by being separated with the predetermined distance.

As discussed below, the independent claims have been amended to reflect the above features. Therefore, Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance.

II. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1-7 and 9-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,751,609 to Kasahara. For the reasons set forth above, Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance.

In particular, claims 1-4 and 6 have been amended to include the features indicated as allowable. Claims 5 and 9-16 are dependent claims, depending on claims amended in this Amendment.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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